

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T BEIRUT 1385

EXDIS TREAT AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MASS, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE REACTION TO ISRAELI PUNITIVE ACTION

1. FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS SUMMONED AMBASSADORS OF FIVE
PERMANENT MEMBERS OF SECURITY COUNCIL TO FOREIGN MINISTRY
TODAY TO MAKE DEMARCHE ON SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON RESULTING
FROM ISRAELI INCURSION. I SAW HIM AT 1300. HE SAID LEBANON
IN QUANDARY BECAUSE OF UNCERTAINTY REGARDING ISRAELI INTENTIONS.
IF ISRAELIS PLANNED REMAIN IN LEBANON FOR FEW DAYS AND THEN
RETIRE, THAT WAS ONE THING. IF THEY PLANNED TO REMAIN LONGER
IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE. (HE IMPLIED LEBANESE GOVERNMENT WOULD
NOT MIND IF ISRAELIS CLEANED OUT PALESTINIANS IN SOUTH AND
WITHDREW BUT WISHED THAT THIS BE DONE QUICKLY BECAUSE IT COULD
NOT REFRAIN FROM SOME REACTION FOR VERY LONG WITHOUT GETTING
INTO SERIOUS TROUBLE.)

2. BOUTROS SAID THERE WERE TWO ALTERNATIVES GOL NOW
CONSIDERING. ONE WAS RESORT TO SECURITY COUNCIL. IT
WOULD AT LEAST BE INFORMING SECURITY COUNCIL OF ISRAELI

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INCURSION TODAY, BUT QUESTION WAS WHETHER TO CALL FOR SC
MEETING AND CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL.

3. ALTERNATIVE WAS TO MAKE REQUEST TO U.S. GOVERNMENT TO
USE ITS INFLUENCE TO MAKE ISRAELIS WITHDRAW. WHAT DID I RE-
COMMEND GOL SHOULD DO?

4. I SAID CHOICE UP TO GOL. IT OBVIOUSLY WOULD BE UNDER ARAB AND DOMESTIC PRESSURE TO DO SOMETHING. RESORT TO SECURITY COUNCIL WAS OBVIOUS STEP, BUT ISRAEL WOULD PROBABLY IGNORE WHATEVER RESOLUTION WAS TAKEN. IF REQUEST WAS MADE OF USG BY GOL IT WOULD BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY AND WE WOULD MAKE SINCERE EFFORT TO HELP LEBANESE, BUT I COULD NOT PREDICT RESULTS.

5. BOUTROS SAID PROBLEM WITH REQUEST FOR SC MEETING WAS THAT IT WOULD TURN INTO A DEBATE ON THE PALESTINE QUESTION AND WOULD BE USED MORE TO PLEAD THE PALESTINIAN CASE THAN TO DEFEND LEBANON. FURTHERMORE, IF GOL SOUGHT CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL, SUBSTANTIAL BODY OF LEBANESE OPINION WOULD DEMAND THAT IT ALSO SEEK CONDEMNATION OF PALESTINIANS, SOMETHING GOL COULD NOT DO WITHOUT CAUSING SERIOUS ARAB SPLIT ALONG 1958 LINES. HE THEREFORE INCLINED MORE TO BILATERAL DEMARCHE TO US.

6. AT THIS POINT SOMEONE CALLED WITH REPORT THAT GENERAL GUR HAD ANNOUNCED ISRAELIS PLANNED TO CREATE BUFFER ZONE ALONG BORDER AND TURN CONTROL OF SOUTH OVER TO LEBANESE AUTHORITIES. WE DISCUSSED POSSIBILITIES AND MECHANICS IN LATTER REGARD AND BOUTROS NOTED THAT IF ISRAELIS HAD SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN MIND IT WOULD REQUIRE A GOOD DEAL OF COORDINATION AND AS YET THERE HAD BEEN NO SIGN FROM ISRAELIS OF ANY INTEREST IN WORKING THINGS OUT WITH LEBANON.

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7. COMMENT: AS TEL AVIV HAS NOTED, CHRISTIAN FORCES NOW IN SOUTH WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO GARRISON BUFFER ZONE OF TYPE DESCRIBED BY GUR. FURTHERMORE, ABILITY OF LEBANESE ARMY TO MOVE INTO SOUTH, ASSUMING THAT IS WHAT ISRAELIS HAVE IN MIND, BY NO MEANS CERTAIN AND WOULD DEPEND TO LARGE EXTENT ON WHAT SYRIANS WILLING TO DO ABOUT ARMED PALESTINIANS WHO HAVE FLED NORTH OF THE LITANI AND WHO WOULD BE A SWORD OF DAMOCLES OVER HEADS OF ANY LEBANESE FORCES SOUTH OF THEM.

8. BOUTROS SAID HE WOULD BE CALLING ME AT ABOUT 1730 LOCAL AND I EXPECT AT THAT TIME TO BE SUMMONED TO PRESIDENTIAL PALACE AND BE GIVEN FORMAL REQUEST FOR US TO INTERCEDE WITH ISRAELIS. IF DEPARTMENT HAS ANY GUIDANCE FOR ME WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING IT BEFORE THEN.

9. WOULD ALSO BE MOST USEFUL HAVE ANY INDICATION TEL AVIV CAN GIVE ME REGARDING ISRAELI INTENTIONS.
PARKER

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